

February 24, 2015

Letter of Reference for Preferred Caterer

Application for: Tina Tabbi and Golden Spice Catering

Please consider this letter of reference for Tina Tabbi, Director of Sales and Operations for Golden Spice Catering. I have been Tina's client for four years in my role (my office has been her client for several years with different staff members), as her business provided catering services for an event I organize on behalf of University of Michigan Office of New Student Programs' annual Parent and Family Weekend Tailgate. Our business relationship has been one of the best I have experienced with a vendor and service provider in my ten years of professional work at the University of Michigan. Tina's meticulous attention to detail, efficient management of staff and ability to troubleshoot, problem-solve and propose cost-effective, practical solutions has led to a successful event each year. The Parent and Family Weekend Tailgate is an anchor program that has the University of Michigan President and several other higher administrative staff members in attendance, and as such we are required to execute a polished, vibrant and streamlined event in order to best serve our esteemed guests and paying students and families.

Her expertise is most clear in the choice and presentation of food items, strategic placement of food stations (the event attracts close to 3,000 participants each year) to minimize traffic, and excellent staffing; Tina seems able to anticipate questions and I always am left with the impression that she has thought of the event from all angles, in multiple scenarios, that she communicates clearly. My colleague and co-planner regularly describes Tina as someone who "worries about everything so we don't have to," and I feel this is an accurate description of Tina's dedication and expertise; for this reason and many others we only wish to have Golden Spice Catering for our event.

Beyond the impeccable service, Tina is also very keenly able to negotiate effective relationships with our other partners for the event—the staging and audio/visual, the facilities managers and others—asking important questions that will have a direct impact on how the services are provided; whenever I work with Tina and her team, their concern for the event's overall success beyond the actual catering has been clear. This ranges from electrical outlet availability (for both Golden Spice and our A/V vendor), accessibility of vans and trucks for all vendors, facility access, and efficient setup and takedown.

I have seen Tina at work with her team, explaining the structure of the event and what is required of them—along with her insistent respect for the clients' needs, she has instilled a sense of pride in among her employees for their work and an appreciation for the effort an event of this size requires, that I feel makes Golden Spice stand out among other businesses. Her hands-on approach and organization are modeled by each member of her staff, who, like Tina, are kind, helpful and community-oriented, poised and professional. Of all the moving parts involved in Parent and Family Weekend, each year we feel most confident and at ease knowing Tina's team are working on behalf of the University of Michigan.

In conclusion, I highly recommend Tina Tabbi and Golden Spice Catering as a preferred caterer for Eastern Market Corporation. I feel Eastern Market would benefit greatly from working with Golden Spice and am happy to speak with anyone further about my experience.

Regards,

Lydia Middleton,

Associate Director

Office of New Student Programs

University of Michigan